

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The below listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1 – 38 (Canceled)

39. (Withdrawn) A method of enabling the capture of embolic material which may be released into a blood vessel during a therapeutic interventional procedure, in a system which comprises a guide wire, including a distal end, adapted to be positioned within the blood vessel and to extend to a position distal to an interventional procedure site, and a filter device, adapted to be positioned and deployed at a location in the patient's vasculature distal to the interventional procedure site, and to capture embolic material which may be released into the blood in the blood vessel during the interventional procedure, including an engaging element, for enabling the filter device to be snap-fitted so as to engage the distal end of the guide wire, wherein the method comprises:

snap-fitting the filter device so as to engage the distal end of the guide wire;
inserting the filter device and the guide wire to the location in the patient's vasculature distal to the interventional procedure site; and
expanding the filter device for deployment thereof.

40. (Withdrawn) A method of enabling expandable material to be pre-formed into an expandable configuration of a cage for a filter device, for pre-forming the cage, for enabling the filter device to capture embolic material which may be released into a blood vessel during a therapeutic interventional procedure, wherein the expandable configuration of the cage to be pre-formed by the system provides a substantially uniform pre-formed expandable maximum outer diameter thereof, for maintaining vessel wall

opposition in a patient's vasculature upon deployment of the cage at a location distal to an interventional procedure site, in a system which comprises a male mandrel element, adapted to enable the expandable material to be extended thereover, including a maximum outer diameter portion extending along the length thereof which is substantially uniform and is substantially equal to the maximum inner diameter of the expandable configuration of the cage to be formed thereby, and a female die element, adapted to enable the expandable material to be formed therein, adapted to extend over the male mandrel member and the expandable material, having a cavity therein, the length of which extends for at least a portion of the length of the male mandrel member, the maximum diameter of which is substantially uniform and is substantially equal to the maximum outer diameter portion of the expandable configuration of the cage to be formed thereby, wherein the method comprises:

extending the expandable material over the maximum outer diameter portion of the male mandrel element, so as to form the maximum inner diameter of the expandable configuration of the cage to be formed thereby; and

extending the cavity in the female die element over the male mandrel element and the expandable material, so as to form the maximum outer diameter portion of the expandable configuration of the cage to be formed thereby.

41. (Currently Amended) A system for pre-forming an expandable material into an expandable cage for a filter device, comprising:

a male mandrel element having a particular shape which forms the shape of the inner surface of the expandable cage, the male mandrel element allowing the expandable material to be deformed, bent or heat set to retain the particular shape of the male mandrel element, the male mandrel element having a channel formed therein; and

a female die element having a cavity formed therein of a particular shape which forms the outer surface of the expandable cage, the female die element having a length which extends for at least a portion of the length of the male mandrel member, the

particular shape of the cavity of the female die element allowing the expandable material to be deformed, bent or heat set to retain the particular shape of the cavity; and

a pin receivable within the channel formed in the male mandrel element for maintaining the expandable material aligned relative to the male mandrel element.

42. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 41, further including a heat source for heat setting at least a portion of the expandable material to the particular configuration created by the male mandrel element and the female die element.

43. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 42, wherein the male mandrel element includes a main section, a distal end and a tapered section which extends from the distal end of the main section.

44. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 41, ~~further including a pin,~~ wherein the channel formed in the male mandrel element extends through the male mandrel element and the pin is sufficiently long to be received in the channel while allowing the ends of the pin to extending outside of the channel ~~has a channel formed therein for receiving the pin to maintain the expandable material aligned relative to the male mandrel element.~~

45. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 44, wherein the female die element has a channel ~~has a channel~~ formed therein for receiving the pin to maintain the expandable material aligned relative to the female die element.

46. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 41, wherein the expandable material is cold worked into the particular shape of the male mandrel element and the female die element.

47. (Previously Presented) A system for forming the expanded configuration of an expandable cage for a filter device from a length of tubing, the system comprising:

a male mandrel element having a particular shape which forms the shape of the inner surface of the expandable cage, the male mandrel element allowing the length of tubing to be deformed or bent to retain the particular shape of the male mandrel element, the male mandrel element having a channel formed therein; and

a female die element having a cavity formed therein of a particular shape which forms the outer surface of the expandable cage, the female die element having a length which extends for at least a portion of the length of the male mandrel member, the particular shape of the cavity of the female die element allowing the length of tubing to be deformed or bent to retain the particular shape of the cavity; and

a pin receivable within the channel formed in the male mandrel element for maintaining the expandable material aligned relative to the male mandrel element.

48. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 47, further including a heat source for heat setting at least a portion of the length of tubing to the particular configuration created by the male mandrel element and the female die element.

49. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 47, wherein the male mandrel element includes a main section, a distal end and a tapered section which extends from the distal end of the main section.

50. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 47, ~~further including a pin,~~ wherein the channel formed in the male mandrel element extends through the male mandrel element and the pin is sufficiently long to be received in the channel while allowing the ends of the pin to extending outside of the channel ~~has a channel formed therein for receiving the pin to maintain the length of tubing aligned relative to the male mandrel element.~~

51. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 50, wherein the female die element has a channel has a channel formed therein for receiving the pin to maintain the length of tubing material aligned relative to the female die element.

52. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 47, wherein the length of tubing is cold worked into the particular shape of the male mandrel element and the female die element.